



# Search and Rescue

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## Emergency Management Division Washington Military Department

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### Background

State law (RCW 38.52) assigns the responsibility for Search and Rescue (SAR) to local law enforcement. In addition, it established the position of State Coordinator for SAR Operations to support local SAR activities.

Search and Rescue resources come primarily from citizen volunteers, more than 5,000 strong, who cooperate with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies, giving of their time and personal resources to train and to search for and rescue lost and injured people. The volunteer SAR organizations also form the foundation of any community's response to a major disaster.

The initial point of contact for local SAR coordinators or emergency management offices when requesting additional SAR mission resources is the State Emergency Operations Officer (SEOO).

### Support for Local SAR Activities

The state SAR Coordinator serves as a liaison with organizations that provide resource support to SAR operations and provides coordination during SAR operations. The coordinator maintains a statewide SAR resources database; coordinates the Emergency Worker Program under RCW 38.52 and WAC 118-04; and sponsors and facilitates SAR training programs, in addition to establishing training and operational standards and procedures. When appropriate, the coordinator manages the state's role in Emergency Support Function (ESF) 9, Urban Search and Rescue (Federal Response Plan) and may activate the state's Rescue Coordination Center for operations coordination in large and/or multi-jurisdictional SAR missions.

### Contact

For additional information, please contact Chris Long, SAR Coordinator, at (253) 512-7024, or e-mail [c.long@emd.wa.gov](mailto:c.long@emd.wa.gov).